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COUNCIL AGENDA: 4-19-05

ITEM: 5.2

Memorandum

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Councilmember Campos

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: April 18, 2005

Approved

Date

4/18/2005

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATION FOR NAMING OF THE NEW BRANCH LIBRARY ON ALUM ROCK AVENUE.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the community-supported name, "The Dr. Roberto Cruz-Alum Rock Branch Library" for the new library currently being constructed at Alum Rock Avenue and White Road in accordance with the criteria set forth in Council Policy 7-5, Naming of City-Owned Land and Facilities, outlined below:

The City encourages:

1. Naming which reflects the City's ethnic and cultural diversity.
2. The recognition of individuals who have made a significant contribution to the community, state, nation, or the world.
3. The recognition of individuals for their service to the community.

BACKGROUND

On October 22, 2004, Aaron R. Reséndez, a community leader with the East Valley/680 Neighborhood Association in District Five, submitted a proposal to name the new library on Alum Rock Avenue the "Dr. B. Roberto Cruz Branch Library."

Dr. Roberto Cruz is probably best known for establishing the National Hispanic University on Story Road in East San José. He recognized the need for education for disadvantaged students that provided academic support and role models not available at larger campuses and he dedicated his life working towards that goal. He founded the National Hispanic University in 1981 and modeled it after the successful African-American colleges that he had observed. He brought the National Hispanic University to San José in 1991, and developed strong partnerships with San José State University, NASA, and other Silicon Valley institutions to increase the opportunities for students at NHU. Since that time, the National Hispanic University has transformed a dilapidated former elementary school campus into a nationally – recognized college campus- one of only three Hispanic Universities in the nation, and the only one west of Chicago.

Dr. Roberto Cruz's accomplishments and recognition go far beyond the City of San José.

His awards extend beyond San José and the Hispanic community and include induction into the LULAC Hispanic Hall of Fame, induction into the African American Educators Hall of Fame, the Martin Luther King Good Neighbor Award, the Oakland Asian Community Leadership Recognition, and over 120 other education awards.

The intent of Council Policy 7-5, Naming of City-Owned Land and Facilities, is to allow the community a chance to provide their input to the Commission and to make a decision that reflects the wishes of the community. In accordance with the requirements of this policy, the proposal was sent to the Library Commission for a public hearing and formal recommendation.

At the Library Commission meeting on March 9, 2005, 7 community members spoke in favor of the name, 3 wanted to keep the geographic name, and 2 proposed different names. Of those who wanted to keep the geographic name, all were willing to compromise with a combination of the two. Additionally, several letters in support of Mr. Resendez' proposal were sent to the Commission prior to the meeting. The Library Commission chose to keep the original name of the former County library.

The Library Commission cited the desire to retain geographic names in order to make the libraries easier to locate. With regard to geographic names, Council policy 7-5 states "the City encourages the recognition of distinct geographic, environmental or developmental features, or names of historical significance in *naming City parks*."

Based on the community input that I have received with regard to the naming of the library, I would like to suggest a compromise of "The Dr. Roberto Cruz-Alum Rock Branch Library" in the interest of honoring a great leader who inspired the youth of the City of San José to achieve their goals, dreams and potential through higher education, and in keeping with the tradition of geographic names for branch libraries.